



Boulder Elementary School

School District #7

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To whom it may concern:

I write this letter in support of Larry Lattin and the community of Boulder as they pursue the procurement of the veterans' center here in Boulder.

Boulder Elementary independent school district #7 is located in Boulder Montana, 28 miles South of Helena and 33 miles North of Butte. Currently Boulder Elementary has 132 kids in the elementary (K-6) school and 47 in the junior high. In addition to serving the population of Boulder, the students who attend the Youth Dynamics Incorporated are served by the school district. YDI serves students from grades 6-12 and Boulder Elementary school provides instructional staff and special education case management and services to the students residing there who are enrolled in grades 6-8. Boulder elementary also provides education for the 7th and 8th grade students from Basin, Montana which is 11 miles South of Boulder.

The students at Boulder Elementary school are served by 16 certified staff and 14 classified staff. The administration consists of a combination principal / superintendent and a board of 5 trustees. The population of Boulder is made up of a high population of kids who are living in and near poverty and the current percentages of free and reduced lunch reflects this trend: 77% of k-6 students are currently eligible and 60% at the 7-8 level are eligible. The numbers of students eating free and reduced lunch and breakfast averages very close to the numbers eligible on a daily basis. Approximately 20 kids are identified and receiving special education services; three students currently receive the services of a 1 to 1 aid for the amount of time they are in school due to the severity of their disability.

Boulder Elementary receives special education services through the Prickly Pear special education cooperative and the superintendent serves on the board of trustees of Prickly Pear. The elementary school is the first year of becoming an RTI school. We have utilized federal Title 1 stimulus and IDEA stimulus monies to place one of our teachers on special assignment to lead the implementation of RTI and act as an instructional coach. While this population of student usually proves very difficult to work with, Boulder Elementary made AYP in 2009 and safe haven in 2008. Accreditation issues for our school have centered around the placement of non-certified staff in the area of teaching English at the Jr. High level.

The academic achievement of students at Boulder Elementary school is something I am very proud of. While the trend in Montana is for high needs schools to falter in assessments, we here at Boulder Grade School have been trending up for each of the last three years. The new programs we have in place as well as a fine faculty, of which 75% hold MA degrees, and the desire and culture to work kids to excellence are all facets of